The Church School Teacher

ume XVII DECEMBER 1948 Number 10

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MAGAZINE FOR CHURCH SCHOOL WORKERS

THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER

VOLUME XVII No. 10

DECEMBER 1948

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The Cover Picture

Eyes shining, little girl at right, a Protestant Sunday school pupil, gets a Christmas gift sent by churches in America. Protestant churches in the United States have thus made Japanese youngsters happy each Christmas since the war. *Religious News Service Photo*

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Published monthly except during July and August by the Augustana Book Concern under the auspices of the Board of Parish Education of the Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod of North America. J. VINCENT NORDGREN, Editor, 2445 Park Avenue, Minneapolis 4, Minn. Yearly subscriptions: five or more to one address, 85 cents each. Single subscriptions, $1.00. In changing address, give both old and new address. All literary contributions should be sent to the editor. Address all business correspondence to Circulation Department, Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Ill. Entered as second-class matter December 24, 1931, at the post office at Rock Island, Ill., under Act of March 3, 1879.

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"Greater Power"

By BIRDINE PETERSON

WITH her mother's help, eight-year-old Mary was packing her suitcase for a holiday vacation. When her mother asked if she didn't want to take her new Bible along to read while she was away, Mary came close to her mother's side and whispered confidentially, "I don't want to hurt God's feelings, but the Bible is an awfully long book, isn't it?" Too often both young and old reject the Bible as an "awfully long book," instead of enthusiastically receiving it as the Word of the Living God.

As Christian teachers, we want to accept the responsibility of helping our students make "regular, intelligent and fruitful use of the Bible." But how? Our teaching of the Word depends upon the place that Word has in our lives.

The Word of God must mean more than a body of doctrines and ideas about the Triune God or a book of stories about the life and principles of Jesus. With Luther, we must listen in the Word to the "Gospel of God concerning His Son" and with Paul, experience the "power of God unto salvation."

Our concept must have the same vitality and freshness as that of the Apostles. "The Truth which they proclaimed was not an impersonal something to be understood and pondered about. It was a gift to be received, a life to be lived, a Master to be joyfully followed even unto death. It centered around a living Person in whom God had become alive and established personal fellowship with them."*

That personal fellowship comes to us through His Means of Grace —the Word of God and the Sacraments. It is essential, therefore, that we use His Word diligently in study and in worship.

There are innumerable helps for

*Kantonen, *Resurgence of the Gospel.*

Bible Study available. A few of them are listed below:

1. *A Bible Commentary:* a work which gives comments on the meaning of various books and passages in the Bible. A suggested commentary is Dummelow's *One Volume Bible Commentary.*

2. *A Bible Dictionary:* a book that gives information on various people, places and subjects mentioned in the Bible. For example, if one is studying Ephesians, he can learn the setting for the Epistle by looking up "Ephesus," The Bible Dictionary will give the location, history and present condition of the city. *Westminster's Bible Dictionary* is, in most respects, excellent.

3. *A Bible Concordance:* a book which lists in alphabetical order the main words found in the Bible and then gives under each word the Biblical passages where this word is found. *A Complete Concordance to Holy Scriptures* by A. Cruden is helpful.

These three reference books should be accessible to every teacher. There are many other helpful books, e.g. Bible histories, Bible geographies and atlases, and modern translations of the Bible.

Over and above all these material helps is a spiritual one that is imperative—a right spirit. Fortunately, the Holy Spirit is present to enlighten the sincere student of God's Word and to help where there is a right spirit.

There are various methods of Bible Study that can be used with profit. The study of the Bible by books is a common procedure. Select a book of particular interest. Read it through rapidly for a general impression. Try to find out all you can about the author, the place and time of writing, the conditions under which the book was written, etc. Then study this book section by section, consulting frequently your Bible Commentary. Finally, read the entire book again.

A study of the Bible by topics will help one understand what the Bible as a whole teaches on a given subject. Select such a subject as salvation, sin, forgiveness or prayer. Look up this topic in your concordance and note all the references indicated. Study each passage, preferably in the order in which it is written. Consult your commentary. Write a summary of the results of your study. Now look up the topic in your Bible Dictionary and read what it has to say on the subject. Compare your findings with those of the author you have just read.

Turn to page 25

"A Sign Unto You"

"HIS HIGHEST wish was that he might celebrate Christmas in heaven with his dear Saviour." Those are the words inscribed on a tombstone in the carefully kept cemetery of the Chisago Lake church in rural Minnesota. They express the pious desire of more than one of the sturdy pioneers who helped establish churches in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys. At Yuletide these farmers and craftsmen laid aside all but necessary chores. They feasted and sang, visited their neighbors and went often to church. Their observance of Christmas was looked forward to for weeks, looked back upon longingly from the midst of pioneer toil.

Today the common - or - garden variety of Christian also turns to the day of our Lord's birth as the greatest festival of the church year. Theologians and scholars may tell us with clear logic that we ought to regard as "greatest" either Good Friday or Easter, but somehow the common man looks upon Christmas as the most meaningful day in the year. Time was, when many leaders in American Protestantism tried to eliminate the observance of Christmas entirely, arguing that it was "popish" or worse. But theirs was a lost cause. Both scholars and iconoclasts are impotent before the wave of popular devotion to the Babe in the manger.

"For unto you," said the angel to the shepherds, "is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

This is the sign. The God who created all the flaming suns of the universe and planted in His creation resources unbelievable until discovered, comes to us as a helpless babe, lying in a manger in a stable. It is as if He had been placed on the cold doorstep of this comfort-loving world. What an amazing way of telling us of God's vast, outreaching love! What further step can one ask of his Maker before he opens his heart to Him?

At Bethlehem, all the elements of His life, death, resurrection, and ascension were brought to a focus. Here was the joy of His blessed presence and the sorrow He had begun to endure as the heritage of fallen mankind. Already at Bethlehem, men were bowing before Him in adoration and other men were plotting His death. And at Bethlehem the heavenly hosts

were singing praise to the Man who was God.

But this gospel still had to be unfolded before human eyes, step by step, through childhood, youth, and manhood. The world was made by Him, but the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, but His own received Him not. The measure of human rebelliousness was not full until the world had rejected its Saviour and numbered Him with the transgressors by nailing Him to a cross. But by His death, death was destroyed. All this had to take place before the sign to the shepherds could be understood in its full significance; yet it was all implied at Bethlehem.

Today the confusion of our world, with its cold war and the desolation of the collapse in Europe, stands out in pathetic contrast to the Christmas gospel of peace and good will. But it was no bright and happy word when Christ came to Bethlehem, either. Bloodshed and suffering, hunger and pain, privation and fear were common then, too. And so it has been most of the time. The innocent have been made to suffer for the sins of the guilty. Life has always been a desperate struggle with an inevitable end in death.

It was to such a world that the angels sang of peace, a peace of which the small and helpless Babe was the sign.

God wants peace on earth. Of that there can be no doubt. And the means for having it are here. Until peace comes to all men, the loving will of God is in conflict with all forces of evil in our world. The conflict continues, and must continue until men have learned His ways.

In a sense, the peace that Christ brings is not an earthly peace. It is not primarily the absence of war or striving or suffering. It is the peace that dwells in the hearts of those who respond to the coming of Christ. The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, is the peace that can be found at the heart of a storm.

It is the peace that finds rest in God and takes courage because the soul has found its Saviour. It is the peace that has come to many a soldier, on each side of battle, in the midst of pain and death. It is the kind of peace Thomas More had when he told his executioners that he hoped he might "be merry in heaven" with them.

But once that peace has come to a heart, it can not rest until it has followed the Prince of Peace in helping to carry the gospel to

all corners of the world and into all the highways and byways of life, so that there shall be no more war and the tragedy that follows in its wake. Christians must ever be ambassadors of good will.

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men! And he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

How Are We Coming?

Both the Augustana Lutheran Church and the American Lutheran Church have set goals for substantial increases in Sunday school enrollment. In the ALC the goal is 300 thousand. In Augustana it's "150 thousand by 1950."

What headway is being made? The undersigned does not have the latest figures for the ALC, but hopes that Director Vogeley will supply them in our next issue. However, the 1947 report for the Augustana Church is available. It shows that:

1. From 1942 to 1947 (5 years) Sunday school enrollment grew from 99,747 to 109,973. This is a gain of more than 10 per cent.

2. From 1942 to 1947 (5 years) cradle roll enrollment increased from 15,915 to 29,529. This is a gain of more than 90 per cent.

3. From 1942 to 1947 (5 years) enrollment of confirmed persons (Bible classes) diminished from 25,157 to 21,868. This was a loss of more than 13 per cent.

This means that ground has been lost at a strategic point. It is a loss that weakens the whole church.

Fewer Dusty Bibles

By JAMES V. CLAYPOOL

SEEING an unused Bible lying about in his home, a small boy asked his mother whose book it was. "It is God's Book," she is reported to have said. "Well," replied the boy, "don't you think we should return it. Nobody seems to read it!"

Stories like the above do not apply to all the homes of America, according to Dr. Frederick Cropp, secretary of the American Bible

Society, who has spent a considerable amount of time investigating just this situation. "People are wrong who say that while the Bible may be the world's best seller, it is the least read book and the book that nobody knows," continued Dr. Cropp.

The use of helps for reading the Bible and lists of suggested Scripture passages is way above pre-war years as indicated by the figures of religious publishing houses. "The Bible Society alone," declared Dr. Cropp, "distributed last year on request more than 15,000,000 copies of the bookmark containing a list of readings for the Worldwide Bible Reading between Thanksgiving and Christmas. In addition the list was reprinted more than 20,000,000 times. An even larger response is expected this year in observance of the program, which has as its theme, 'The Book of All Nations.' One million copies of a reading list, made up of passages to be read daily throughout the year were circulated also by the Bible Society.

Commercial and religious publishing houses continually bring out "new" Bibles, new in the sense they contain outlines, explanations and many references to help the reader in understanding obscure and difficult passages. The Revised Standard Version of the New Testament, a version in the plain and direct language of today, held its place in the list of religious best sellers for many months, following its publication in 1946. The Bible, that used to appear in nothing but a sombre binding of black, can now be found in attractive, colored bindings, appealing to the eye in format and readability of type.

Uncounted millions of Americans listen every Sunday in their churches to ministers reading from the Scriptures. One of the most popular radio programs of its class, according to a Hooper rating, is the half-hour broadcast on Sunday evening of "The Greatest Story Ever Told," based entirely on incidents taken from the Bible. This program came on the air for its third year on September 12. It is short-waved throughout the world, over the World Radio University of Boston through its three outlets.

At the last annual convention of the Rabbinical Council of America, Rabbi Uri Miller of Baltimore, Maryland, spoke for his colleagues when he said that "the Bible is our greatest source of prestige. We must continue to be a Bible loving and Bible studying people."

At a recent solemn mass in St.

Patrick's Cathedral, New York, one of the Catholic staff called upon all followers of Christ "to read and know the Scriptures better than we know any book written by any human being." The recently formed Spanish Biblical Society has reported in that country greater interest among people in the reading and studying of the Bible. To help in this, the Spanish Society has distributed thousands of copies of the Scriptures. Distribution of Protestant Scriptures is now allowed in Spain in English, French and German.

This phenomenon of increased reading of the Bible is not confined to our own land. A recent visitor to Japan has reported seeing the Japanese reading copies of the New Testament on park benches and while riding in buses and trains. The Student Christian Association there operates makeshift sidewalk Bible stalls in Tokyo where the passerby may secure a copy of the Scriptures, so great has been the demand for the books.

Young people by the hundreds, in and about Tokyo, meet weekly for study of the Bible, according to information received by the American Bible Society from the Bible Society in Japan. About 120 city and student YMCA groups are currently meeting in Japan also, reports K. Nagamatsu, who serves as director of a YMCA "Read - the - Bible" Movement which got under way 15 months ago, according to Religious News. Nagamatsu said many of the groups hold their meetings in factories during lunch hours. The American Bible Society has not been able to fill the calls for Scriptures from Japan, although it has supplied 2,775,345 copies from July 1, 1945 to the end of June 1948. Scripture publication is now possible in Japan and the Bible Society has furnished, in addition to the actual books, 105 tons of Bible paper and has been asked to secure 230 additional tons for editions of Japanese Scriptures.

In Edinburgh, it is learned, a six-year schedule is being launched in Scottish schools which will insure that every boy and girl will receive Scripture training "on a par with mathematics and languages," and "know the Bible as well as their grandfathers."

The Hope of the World

"A little child, a shining star,
A stable rude, the door ajar;
Yet in that place, so crude, forlorn,
The hope of the world was born." —Author unknown.

Problems Mean Possibilities

By W. G. MONTGOMERY

EVERY problem the adult class meets head-on, means a new possibility; and strange as it may seem, its possibilities for achievement increase with the number of problems it must meet. Thus, no class of adults should be discouraged because of problems it has on hand.

Instead of discouragement, this should be a cause for thankfulness. The fact that a class has problems is the best reason why it is needed. If there were no problems, there would be no need for a class, teacher, or even a school. It is also true that if a class had no problems, it would have no possibilities, either. The solution of each problem means that you have achieved another possibility.

Now, of course, each problem means there is something ahead to be worked out. This problem may be one of attendance, or securing a teacher, or creating class interest. In fact, the class or school may face a dozen problems today, but this means also that it has a dozen possibilities as yet unrealized. If you should say, yes, but our problems look impossible, permit me to add that there is no easy road to any place worth going to, and besides, I do not believe anything is impossible to an adult class that really sets out to accomplish it.

Turning problems into accomplishments will also bring happiness to a class as nothing else can. Even one's own personal happiness depends upon achieving hard, impossible things.

Nor is a problem rarely ever as hard as it looks from a distance. As we close in upon it, we discover it's much easier to solve than we had supposed. A peculiar temptation of some classes and teachers alike is that of magnifying difficulties out of all proportion. And because they seem so hard, we simply turn away without trying to solve them.

Like the spies Moses sent into Canaan, who, upon returning, said, "We saw giants, and were in our own sight as grasshoppers," we, too, find some adult classes which think of problems as giants and themselves as grasshoppers. You will notice the spies said it was "in our own sight," that they

looked like grasshoppers. It is when we look at problems as God sees them and sees us, that we change them into possibilities.

The supposed difficulties of any adult class will disappear and problems will be solved if we will but rise to face them, as the old-time mountain shepherd faced the wind. It is claimed that the shepherd of other days, when caught in a storm of sleet or snow, would turn his flock toward the wind and force them to move straight ahead. Had they traveled with the wind, the easy way, soon ice would have formed under the wool and frozen them to death. So it is with a class. When it heads into a difficulty, it saves itself from possible disintegration.

Any class can save itself from a difficult situation, and realize a new victory because of it, when the difficulty is met head-on by courageous men or women who know what they want. No undertaking is too big for a class or teacher or school if the possibilities to be reached are emphasized instead of the problems in the way.

The conquest of Canaan was the possibility Moses had in mind when he sent spies to investigate, but they saw only the problems of high walls and tall men and other things that would make its conquest impossible. But later on you read how the walls fell down when men of faith marched in. And they always do. No walls nor giants can stop a class that really wants to go on and over.

The spies depreciated themselves. They discounted their own ability; and class depreciation is the worst thing possible. Any class can accomplish anything as long as it thinks it can, but the moment it surrenders to a problem, it's about done for. When faith is lost, when courage dies, the class is dead.

It is claimed by some good psychologists that only one person in twenty sees the possibilities in a given situation; the other nineteen see only the problems in the way, and never get beyond them. The nineteen compromise by saying, "We know it's a good thing, but it just can't be done." Meanwhile the one who sees only the possibility pushes the problems out of the way and reaches the goal.

Notice now a few examples of problems both teacher and class will have to meet. You can name many others, and I give these as mere examples in order to suggest a general method of treatment. First, take the teacher himself.

One of his problems will be that of meeting criticism, either expressed or implied. I think it is true that no teacher is ever so wise or perfect as to be well liked by every member of the class. He may not be disliked by any member, but always in any fairly large class, there will be someone who would prefer somebody else for teacher; and if the teacher is capable he will know this feeling without being told.

I suppose there was never a superintendent or teacher who pleased everybody. At least, I have never heard of anyone still living who did that. Mistakes will be made after doing our best, and if not pointed out by someone, they will still be seen. Very well, what will the teacher do about it?

Really, there is only one wise thing to do, ignore it. If the criticism is just, the teacher may profit from it, and should be thankful. If unjust, the wise teacher will pay no attention to it, and will never let the critic know that he knows it. I have known teachers to become sour and show displeasure toward their critics, which is the worst thing they could do. If a teacher knows of someone in his class who is openly opposed to him as teacher, the wise thing to do is to show his critic the highest respect and call on him frequently to help him with the class.

Such fault-finders are not bad. Some of them were just born that way, and others because they have cultivated too long the ugly disposition of calling attention to the wrong side of things, talk that way because of habit. But they really mean well, and a teacher should never become disturbed over such trifles.

An Indian who wished to get rid of some vicious old eagles, tied a coal of fire to an arrow and shot it into their nest. Had the old birds let it alone, it would have gone out and done no harm. But they were nesting, and so to protect the young eaglets, they began to fight and fan with their wings the coal of fire, until finally it burst out into flame, destroying the nest and the young birds.

What those eagles did, some of us still do. The best way to overcome opposition is not to answer it. We only hurt our influence by striking back, and convince nobody, Silence is the wisest answer to criticism, and the religious leader, teachers and others will need to be silent many times. It's the way to save themselves for a greater service.

Among class problems, I would put poor attendance as a main one. The problem is how to increase it, and this can be worked out several ways. I have known adult classes to go to pieces with scarcely no one but the teacher left, when a little planning, and facing problems as the old shepherds faced the wind, would have resulted in those classes becoming larger all the while.

I have found that social shyness keeps a good many adults away. They don't like to meet people, suffer from an inferiority feeling. Such persons constitute a bigger problem than most of us have recognized.

So, instead of naming other problems, I suggest that the class itself discover its own peculiar problems and set about to solve them. In doing this, it will become the outstanding class in the school, and be the happiest because of the many im(possible) things it achieves.

Roads to a Real Christmas

By RUBYE PATTON NORDGREN

EACH YEAR soon after the Thanksgiving festival teachers of smaller children begin to make plans for Christmas. The aim is not only to recall dear customs but also to capture anew the deeper meanings of this happiest season of the year. That is, to see God's goodness in giving the Christ child; to realize something of what Jesus has meant and does mean to those who receive Him; and to give expression to joy and thanksgiving in sharing Christmas, whether it be by singing carols or giving some material gift.

To accomplish our aims we may lead the child over paths which he can appreciate and enjoy. We who lead will find enrichment and satisfaction, too. These paths might be called *interest roads* because each one is of interest to children and grown-ups alike.

The Story Road

The first is the story road. Using Luke 2. 1-7 and Luke 2. 8-14, we read these verses over and over until we know them from memory and our hearts are gladdened by their power and beauty.

The angels' song is followed by the story of the shepherds and their visit to the Christ Child (Luke 2. 15-21). These verses should also become a part of the child's knowledge.

The third Bible story is that of the Wise-men following the star and bringing gifts to the Christ child.

Poems are stories in verse, as: "There's a Beautiful Star," "The Dear Little Jesus," "O Christmas Tree." These and others may be memorized as "stories."

Many supplementary stories are a delight to young and old: *The Jar of Rosemary,* by Lindsay, *Why the Chimes Rang,* by Alden, *Dobry's Christmas Creche,* by Shannon; also *In Clean Hay,* which is found in *The Christmas Nightingale,* by Eric Keely. Three other good stories are to be found in Cynthia Pearl Maus' book, *Christ and the Fine Arts: When the King Came, The Shepherd's Story,* and *If He Had Not Come.* Any public librarian will gladly help one find this material.

There are a number of interesting legends which primary children can understand, of which the following are examples:

It is said that the fir tree became a symbol of Christmas in 724 A. D. St. Boniface, an English missionary, was traveling through Central Europe. He came to a place where heathen tribes worshiped Thor, the god of thunder. Thor was angry, the people thought, and to appease his wrath they had chosen a young boy and were about to sacrifice him as a burnt offering to Thor. But the missionary told them the story of the birth of Christ and persuaded them to burn a fir tree instead of the boy. Later the tribes were converted and clung to the idea of the evergreen tree as their Christmas tree.

It is Martin Luther who is credited with placing lights on the Christmas tree. He thought "it should look like the sky, that night when Jesus was born."

The candle in the window is to symbolize Christ, the light of the dark world.

A log fire is reputed to be of the kind of heat used by Mary to keep the baby Jesus warm when she bathed and dressed Him.

A Yule log is lighted to kindle warmth and love. In many countries it is carried indoors and put in place with much ceremony.

The use of holly dates back to a pagan custom. The Druids, pagan priests, believed that the holly tree brought good luck. Early Christians used it, and we use it

today to give a cheery note to our home or costume.

The legend of St. Nicholas or Santa Claus comes to life every year. He returns as a jolly figure with the spirit of good will, in deeds and gifts. Wherever he goes, there is a message of love and sharing.

The Picture Road

The Christmas story in pictures has almost unlimited possibilities. We tell the children something like this:

The baby Jesus never had His picture taken by a photographer or by His mother, as you have had. But there have been men who painted pictures of the boy Jesus and His mother. They have made the pictures as they thought Mary and Jesus looked. Sometimes the artist would see a very beautiful mother, and he would think, "She is lovely. She is kind. I will paint her as Jesus' mother." Again, the artist saw a lovely baby. "That baby is beautiful," he would say. "I shall paint its picture and I think it will be like the baby Jesus." (Some of the most appealing pictures are found in *Christmas Ideals,* an annual published by the Ideals Publishing Co.)

The artist would paint his picture, and bye and bye another artist would paint another baby and mother which he thought lovely. So we have many beautiful pictures that show us how people have thought the baby Jesus must have looked.

Then we look at a picture, perhaps the "Madonna of the Chair," and while the children look, tell the following story:

Once there was an artist who wanted to paint a picture of the baby Jesus and His mother. Of course he had never seen Jesus, and he wondered and wondered what He looked like. He thought Jesus must have been a lovely brown-eyed, brown-haired baby. He thought Mary must have been very sweet and beautiful. One day when he was out walking, the artist passed a little home. On the porch sat a mother holding her baby. Another little boy was playing near them. The baby had big, brown eyes and brown hair. The mother was lovely.

"What a beautiful baby!" said the artist. "What a lovely mother! I think the baby Jesus and His mother might have looked like this baby and his mother."

As important as scenery is to taking a walk, so are pictures an

essential part of both story and song roads. Perhaps a grouping of these will help.

Artist	*Picture*	*Song*	*Reference*
Hacker	The Annunciation		Luke 1. 26-33, 38
Corregio	The Holy Night	Silent Night, Holy Night	Luke 2. 1-7
Plockhorst	Tidings of Great Joy	While Shepherds Watched	Luke 2. 8-14
Le Rolle	Arrival of Shepherds	Away in a Manger	Luke 2. 15-16
Belyea	The Wise Men	O Come, All Ye Faithful	Matthew 2. 10
Rubens	Adoration of the Magi	There's a Beautiful Star	Matthew 2. 11

The Play and Song Road

The play and song road is for all, children and grown-ups alike. Playing and singing are achievements and need to be practiced often. In Sunday school and at home we will re-enact the Christmas story whether the manger scene is a dollar creche or an expensive assortment of scenery, animals, and characters. Let us gather close about it and sing beloved Christmas hymns, such as: *O Little Town of Bethlehem; Away in a Manger; Jesus, Our Brother; O Little Children, Do You Know.*

There are also songs that we dramatize: *Bring the Torch; There's a Beautiful Star; We Three Kings,* etc.

Older primaries and the family at home enjoy playing Dickens' *Christmas Carol.*

Let us make play of decorating our Christmas tree with gay colors: red for the blazing Yule log, golden topaz for the star, blue for the Christmas sky, and white because it's "clean like Jesus," as one child put it. Living rooms may be made festive by banking windows with balsam, pine, magnolia, smilax, poinsettias, or whatever else is available, and lighting with cheerful candles.

The Gift Road

The gift road is good to travel, especially at Christmas. "God so loved . . . that He gave . . ." "He loved us and sent his Son." He is the best of all gifts. But He also receives. The Wise-men brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the Holy Child. With this background of giving we make Christmas a time of giving as well as receiving.

Our gifts say, "In His name I greet you;" "Because He came, I send this card." These remembrances make for good feeling.

Christmas is a time to create good will, cement friendships, right wrongs, and let our light shine. Neighbors, relatives, and friends might never be as close were it not for the opportunity this season gives for spreading good will. "God loved us and sent his Son." Likewise it is right to help little children both to give and to receive unselfishly.

This road may lead us to some needy family which we will "adopt" for the season. Their basket will hold food, playthings, books, clothes and other things that are given from the heart because the love of Christ is there!

Waste Not, Want Not

By GERTRUDE HILL

"IT seems a shame to throw away these beautiful Christmas greetings, gift boxes and the decorative Christmas wrappings!" How often that has been said after the festivities of the holiday season! Not only at Christmas, but also following Easter and other celebrations when gifts and cards are occasions of remembrance, do we wish we could put these things to some practical use.

Surely there are some ways we can put these articles to good use in the Sunday schools, vacation and weekday church schools. Not only can we put them to immediate use, but we may also begin a long-range plan before taking up a new unit of study. By looking ahead in each quarter in the Christian growth series we can decide which activities will best serve the units of study to be developed and collect the necessary supplies ahead of time for thorough planning and sufficient preparation in our teaching. This procedure is likewise helpful for effective teaching in the Vacation and Weekday Church Schools.

Creative activities call for varied supplies. Most of these supplies would be at our disposal if we only had acquired the squirrel habit of collecting them so that they would be on hand as they were needed. The nature of the projects to be developed will determine the necessary supplies.

The following supplies and the ways in which they can be used

are merely suggestive of the unlimited possibilities and opportunities in developing creative activities related to the units of study being taught.

Greeting cards. These pictures can be mounted on a panel poster or frieze to illustrate successive scenes of the Christmas and Easter stories. Or, the pictures can be placed in individual packets as resources for each child when illustrating a notebook, scrapbook, picture book, Bible verse cards, flash cards, book marks or a pictorial map (small pictures mounted on map showing events in their locations).

Tissue paper and cellophane are indispensable in making peep shows. The peep show is a miniature scene of staggered stand-ups (characters, scenery props, objects, etc.) placed at one end of a long box, such as a shoe box. At the other end of the box a hole is cut through which one can view the scene. The top of the box may be covered with tissue paper or cellophane to admit the light and bring the scene into a realistic appearance—as though one were looking through a stereopticon. Cellophane can also be used to cover mounted pictures. Cellophane or colored papers are fine for making miniature art windows and small screens for worship centers.

Candle stubs can again become decorative and useful candles. They can be melted and cast into various forms. For instance, if certain colors are desired, worn-down crayolas can be melted with the candles in an old pan or coffee can. As to forms or molds, jello molds, mailing tubes or boxes can be used. This writer saw the results of an interesting experiment with candle stubs gathered during a vacation church school. When several hundred candle stubs had been collected, they were sorted according to colors, melted and cast in a linoleum roll (used for a 6x9 rug) with a heavy cord for a wick. Each layer of color was allowed to set before another color was melted and cast into the form. The result was a huge six-foot candle of many colored layers. This huge candle was then presented to the church school and used during the Advent and Christmas seasons. This vacation church school project proved to be a joy and inspiration to the pupils in the Sunday school each time this immense candle was lighted for their worship services.

Cords and ribbons have a useful purpose in suspending pictures, mottoes and Bible verse cards.

They can also be used in tying together scrapbooks and workbooks.

Silver paper, tinfoil, gold paper make beautiful backgrounds to illuminate silhouettes, such as a child praying, a church with its steeple, etc.

Box lids may be decorated with crayons, paints or colored papers for the framework around the picture mounted on the lid. The smaller box lids (round, square, hexagon or rectangular) are suitable molds for casting plaster of paris. If a colored picture is placed face down on the box lid greased with vaseline, before the plaster is poured into the form, it will produce a decorative wall plaque.

Heavy wrapping paper comes in handy for panel posters, homemade movies, leaves for scrapbooks, charts and for illustrating chalk talks.

Calendars, particularly religious calendars, usually have beautifully colored pictures which can be mounted on cardboard or construction paper and placed in a picture file.

Lace paper serves as a trimming for seasonal things, as Valentines and May baskets that boys and girls in the kindergarten like to make.

Cardboard has numberless uses. Heavy cardboard is needed as a background for relief maps (made of newspaper pulp or salt and flour mixed with water). Good-sized, distinct pictures of Bible characters can be mounted on cardboard and used as stand-ups for the sand table or sand tray; or they can be inserted in slits in a box lid which could serve as a stage. Many booklets require cardboard for their covers.

Corrugated cardboard can be tacked around the classroom to form a border such as that designated as a "pin-up border" or frieze in the Primary Quarterly of the Christian Growth Series for the first quarter of the second year. Various pictures of objects and characters are pinned in place on the border with straight pins instead of being mounted permanently with paste or glue. Such a pin-up border can depict scenes of life in Palestine being studied in that quarter. Pin-up borders can be changed as the topics of study vary in each quarter.

Boxes of all kinds, shapes and sizes have innumerable uses. The following show some of their uses:

Smaller boxes are good foundations for May baskets. These smaller boxes can also be covered with bright paper for Christmas tree decorations.

Round boxes can be converted to African huts.

Larger boxes are suitable for Palestinian houses. The boxes can either be covered with tempera paint, construction paper or a stucco mixture of equal parts of flour and salt mixed with enough water to make the consistency of thick frosting. A small box can be placed on the top of the flat surface of the larger box to illustrate the guest room found on some Palestinian houses. The large packing boxes are needed for a movie. Heavy brown wrapping paper attached on rollers are secured to the packing box in the movie activity.

Hat boxes give the curved background needed in building a diorama. Scenes are drawn and colored on paper which is then glued to the sides and back of the hat box. The bottom of the hat box serves as the stage upon which the properties of objects and characters are propped in their respective places to depict such scenes as The Manger Scene, The Feast of Booths, or a Market Place in Palestine. A section is cut out of the front portion of the hat box so that the scenes are clearly viewed. The lid of the hat box can be replaced on the top if desired.

No teachers need say that they are wanting in supplies unless they have truly wasted them and let them "go up in smoke." Holiday greeting cards, gift boxes, decorative wrappings and many other such articles need not be destroyed when they can serve in some practical capacity in creative teaching.

The Inner Tube

By CARL J. SILFVERSTEN

INSPECTING various parts of my car one day to see if everything was working right, I came to think of the inner tubes in the tires. It occurred to me, how much the driving depended upon the service and strength of an inner tube. As long as the inner tubes hold out, the car will run with security and speed, even though many other parts may not be in absolutely perfect condition, as often is the case when a car has traveled many thousand miles. But when the inner tube is unsafe, look out, for then there is danger in

driving and no one knows what may happen. If you drive slowly, you may not risk too much, but driving fast, it may mean your life.

A similar condition can be observed in everyday life, though on a wider scale and among people with whom we come in contact in the community where we live.

A certain group of people, and specially certain individuals, draw our attention much more than others, just as certain parts on the car seem to interest us more than others. There are people who want to be looked upon as being of special importance in the place where they live, people who demand that their opinion must be heard on every subject and regarding everything that concerns the community. And no one denies the value of the service which they render to their community, though such service may not always be of the greatest importance.

But what happens is, that we are likely to forget the importance of another group which most of the time remains unnoticed. If we take time to investigate, we discover that were it not for the presence of this group, the community would not be what it is. Every individual in this group is like the inner tube in a tire. The work and the sacrifices of this group help in a most wonderful way to make the place one of importance. For that reason it is no more than fair that the unnoticed group be given consideration, and a word of thanks would be quite appropriate by the far-seeing people of the community.

Perhaps in no place is the importance of the unnoticed group so evident as within the church. To be sure, there are men and women who do a lot of self-advertising by being the first and the last ones to talk and make noise on every issue that does arise. But when it comes to real performance, to sacrifice, yes, and real Christian life, these same people hold back and let others do it and hide behind some subterfuge so as to be excused from doing their duty, a matter which they most carefully see that others perform.

On the other hand we find the unobserved group and the silent individuals are the ones in reality who carry the burdens without a whimper. They attend divine services most regularly and their place in the house of the Lord is seldom vacant on Sunday mornings. These people are the ones who never are too busy to attend prayer meetings —a matter which is out of style

with many others—and these are the ones who stand by the pastor and are at the sick-beds of the forsaken ones, while the loudspeakers busy themselves with affairs of their own.

Now, an inner tube should be given consideration now and then by the wise driver. Though hidden and never thought of for miles and miles, the inner tube may some day rebel and give endless trouble to the driver of a car. In the same manner there might be a limit to the patience and forbearance of the unnoticed group in both the community and the church.

The apostle was right when he wrote these words: "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works." Hebrews 10. 24.

Home Education

Issued by the National Kindergarten Association

Who Was at Fault?

By JANETTE MURRAY
(American Mother for 1947)

"ELLEN seems so unhappy when with her playmates, Mrs. Carson. I came to see you, hoping that together we might bring about a better social adjustment for her before she enters the third grade this fall," said Ellen's teacher.

"Yes, the condition is a problem," admitted her mother. "There's always some quarrel going on. Yesterday the girls said Ellen's white collar and cuffs were old-fashioned. Ellen cried. 'They're jealous,' I said, 'pay no attention. Show them you don't care.' "

"But that attitude will not make her happy, Mrs. Carson. When did the trouble begin?"

"When we moved here a year ago. I've tried hard to be nice to these girls. Ellen has treats for them, brings them in to play, and gives lovely parties. Of course, she isn't perfect, but these girls are downright 'catty.' Really, they're to blame nine-tenths of the time."

"What companions had Ellen before you moved here?"

"None; we lived too far from other children, but I played with

her. She has lots of toys and is very particular about them. I think the girls sometimes disarrange things just to tease her."

"It looks like jealousy, as you say, and we'll have to remove it. Ellen shouldn't continue to be subjected to conditions that cause so much mental turmoil."

"No. What do you think causes this jealousy?" inquired Mrs. Carson.

"To get at the root of it we'll have to analyze the situation. Did it ever occur to you that Ellen is dressed much better than the other girls? Also, that her playthings, parties, and treats are much more elaborate than theirs. Naturally, she feels superior, and she shows it. The girls resent this attitude and feel unfriendly toward her. If a girl is always making others feel inferior with regard to herself and her possessions, will she be popular? Think it over, Mrs. Carson, but don't say anything to Ellen, or she will become self-conscious."

"You may be right," admitted Mrs. Carson after a long pause, "but it isn't a question of money —we have no more than many of our neighbors—rather, it's time and attention. I just love to sew and to fuss over Ellen's affairs."

After this, the teacher noted that Ellen wore her simplest dresses; that her new spring coat was plain; that when the class brought favorite games she came with a simple top and passed it around; that instead of running away from her the girls now let Ellen walk home with them.

"You certainly opened my eyes," said Mrs. Carson to the teacher a few weeks later. "Soon after our talk, I suggested a dolls' tea-party. 'Oh, goody!' cried Ellen, 'my new doll is the biggest.' 'Why not have Lydia Ann?' I said. 'She always goes to bed with you.' 'She won't look nice,' protested Ellen. However, I finally persuaded her to lend the big doll to a *shut-in* cousin. Then Ellen wanted to wear her new red dress and show it off. 'But you're the hostess,' I reminded her. 'Wear your tan, so you'll forget about yourself and make your guests happy.'

"Well, the girls came to the party, carrying their dolls—all finer than Lydia Ann. 'Where's your big doll?' was the first question; they clearly expected to have their dolls overshadowed. 'She's away on a visit. Anyhow, I like Lydia Ann best,' said Ellen. The girls all beamed on Lydia Ann with her scratched nose and on Ellen in her tan dress. They felt superior this time.

"Instead of having the girls car-

ry out one of my usual perfectly planned parties, I let them spread sandwiches, squeeze lemons, and set the table. Such a happy group!

" 'Oh Mother,' exclaimed Ellen to me, after the last small dish was washed and the girls had gone, 'wasn't that the nicest party!' "

I'm Glad My Parents Aren't Separated

By RUTH PECK McLEOD

I SURE am glad my mother and dad aren't separated. There's Tom Tatum, my friend; he stays over at our house most of the time, because he's lonesome for his daddy. He goes fishing and camping with Dad and me lots of times. You see, Tom lives with his mother. She can't get along with his dad, and so his dad lives somewhere else. There's no excuse for them to be separated, my mom says, because all people have their little fusses. Why, even I am on the warpath with my folks sometimes, and they get provoked with me—because all of us don't think the same way about things—but usually, when we talk it over, everything gets settled fine.

Mother and Dad, too, have their little argument once in a while, but shucks!—they soon get over it and always kiss each other and make up. Mom says that if Mrs. Tatum hadn't lived so close to her mother she'd still be with her husband. She was spoiled the worst way, Mom says, and if Tom's dad wouldn't do just what she wanted him to do, she'd go right over to her mother and tell her about it and, of course, her mother would always be on her side.

Then there's Sam Rayburn—I pity him. He lives with his dad. When his folks separated, his mother became an actress and went away, and so he stays with his father in a hotel. Mom says she likes to mother Sam because he has to eat out so much; he loves her home-cooking. He has nobody to sew his buttons on or to darn his socks. And he has no place to play in, unless he comes out to some other guy's house.

But about the worst case I know is Jim Stockwell's. He stays with his mother a while, then he goes to live with his father, and then he comes back to his mother—and he has to keep that up. It seems to me that would make a boy's life very queer. Jim told me confidentially, that his mom always tries to say little things against his dad and his dad's always saying he can't

see why he ever married Jim's mother. Mom says it's awful bad for one parent to run down the other, because every guy wants to be proud of his own folks.

At Christmas it's so sad for all the children of the couples who are separated, and, as Dad says, that should be the happiest time for the family. Then on birthdays and other celebrations—when a fellow wants to be really happy—he can't be very happy if both his parents aren't with him.

When your folks are separated, Jim says it makes you feel mixed up. Because he lives part of the time with his dad and part of the time with his mom, he feels kind of helpless and homeless—as if he wouldn't know where to go if anything happened to him. Now if I get hurt or have any trouble in school, I come straight home to my parents, because I know they'll fix things up. Jim overheard the principal at school telling one of the ladies of the Parent-Teacher Association that Jim, his parents being separated, didn't feel "secure." He didn't know exactly what she meant by that, but, he said, he does know he's all mixed up.

Everybody has arguments; why, my chum, Charley, and I have lots of them. Sometimes, seems as if we get furious with each other; then, after a while, we become ashamed of the mean things we've said and make up, because we really are good pals. That's the way life goes. I'm quick-tempered, but I get over it easily. Dad's like that, too. Now, Mom's more even-tempered and very seldom gets angry, but when she *is* angry you'd better be careful; she doesn't forget as quickly as Dad and I do!

We have one of those old-fashioned framed mottoes hanging in our dining room that says, "Love One Another." It belonged to my great-grandfather. Mom said he gave it to her when she was married, and he said, "Little Granddaughter"—he always called her that—"whenever you have any trouble in the family, just come and read this motto and it will give you all the advice you will need." And—oh boy!—he sure knew what he was talking about!

Storytelling

By ANNIE L. GAETZ

HAVING been a schoolteacher, I had some ability as a storyteller; but when my children grew old enough to repeat the time-worn request, "Tell me a story," I came to appreciate, as I had not in the

past, the character value of a good story well told.

So I searched diligently for stories that were worth telling. I wanted only those that would be thoroughly enjoyed and which, at the same time, would illustrate some helpful truth. I knew that if a story was not interesting, or if it were poorly told, it would not be of much value. A good story is a work of art and exists primarily to be enjoyed. One must love to hear it, not because he seeks from it some special benefit but because it fires his imagination and stirs his feelings. Like a beautiful landscape or a great picture, it must make a strong, personal appeal.

I studied, therefore, to cultivate the story-teller's art. I learned that to tell a story you must really act it out—in change of voice, inflection, in expression of eyes and features, in quiet gestures. By applying myself to the task, I learned also that I must first possess the story in imagination, making it a part of myself. I must possess it logically—grasping its point and holding its details in right relation. I must possess it in feeling, putting my very being into the situation which I want to describe. I found that it was worse than useless to attempt to tell a story that I myself did not appreciate and enjoy.

The story, I discovered, must be reduced to its simplest form and must maintain logical unity and movement. Nothing spoils a story as does the failure to get a particular point in at its rightful place and then going back to supply it. No storyteller should ever be obliged to stop and say, "Oh, I forgot to tell you that—"

The success of the story is not all in the telling; the story itself must be a good one and worth telling. Although the market offers many books of stories for children, it was difficult for me to find stories of the sort I wanted. An occasional fairy tale I considered of value, but I found that most of them did not measure up to what I thought a story ought to convey.

One day I chanced to think back to the stories my mother used to tell and, strange to relate, the only ones which remained in my memory were those from the old-time Book, the Bible. Who can measure the moral value of impressions received through those Bible stories? I came to regard the Bible as a book to be enjoyed. Thinking back over the years, the beauty of those stories appealed to me as no others had, and I began to realize that

while I was searching far and wide for appropriate stories to tell my children, I was overlooking the very choicest ones—and they lay near at hand. What story could be more absorbing to the small child than that of the baby Moses! Children naturally love babies, and the part of the sister, Miriam, can be made very appealing. The story provides excellent scope for the imagination, and its character-building values are all that could be desired.

We picture the mother's grief because her babe is to be destroyed by the cruel king. With many tears, the basket is woven and made waterproof. When all is prepared, and the mother dares keep her babe no longer, she takes it to the water's edge, and with one last, loving look she pushes the basket out into the reeds and entrusts its precious burden to the tender care of the Heavenly Father. Not daring to remain near, she leaves her small daughter, Miriam, to keep watch over the basket. When the princess and her escorts come near, how breathlessly the little sister must be watching to learn the fate of Moses. As the princess takes the babe in her arms, the child is overcome with curiosity and draws near. When she sees that the princess looks kindly on the baby, with real diplomacy she suggests that she could go and call a Hebrew woman to be the baby's nurse. Over all, and above all, we picture God's watchfulness over Moses—the same loving care which He has for all His children.

Many other Bible stories are equally appealing to children, afford equal scope for the imagination, and bestow life-long values.

"Greater Power"

From page 2

A more difficult method is the study of the Bible by historical periods. Divide the story of the Bible into historical periods. A possible division could be: The Story of God's Ancient People; The Story of the World's Saviour; The Story of the Church's Beginnings. Read all the books that deal with one period. Note the great characters, the religious faith and life of this era, the institutions, etc. Read up on each of these in a book on Biblical history or in your Bible dictionary. Write a summary of the history, the people, the institutions, etc. of this period. This type of study helps the student see things in their proper perspective.

Every step in the study of the Word requires interpretation. We ask, "How can we be sure our interpretation is right?" The answer "Let the Bible interpret itself." There are four rules to follow in letting the Bible interpret itself: (1) All language should be taken literally unless the author clearly indicates it to be taken figuratively. (2) Everything in the Bible should be understood in the light of its place in man's moral and spiritual development. "God's truth was not grasped all in a moment." (3) The Bible should be interpreted as a whole. Every passage should be seen in the light of every other passage dealing with the same topic. (4) All parts of the Bible should be viewed in relation to Jesus Christ, Who is the very Heart of the Bible.

"The reward to him who studies the scriptures is that 'greater power shall be granted unto him.' "*

If we would listen to the "Gospel of God concerning His Son" and experience the "power of God unto salvation," we must use His Word in private worship. *Daily* we *need* to commune with God. If we follow the list of Bible references for the Christian Year or a guide such as *The Home Altar,* there will be a sense of order and completeness in our worship life. Of course, the reading should be unhurried and accompanied with thoughtfulness, reverence and prayer. Special devotional books aid us in private worship. *A Diary of Private Prayer* by John Baillie is very helpful.

As we make the Bible our "companion book" we enjoy continuous fellowship with God and receive His Grace which is every morning new. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

"The Word is not only the revealer of divine wisdom but also and primarily the vehicle of divine power, the power to give vital conviction, to break sinful habit, to redirect the will, to bridge the chasm between God and man."* When we grasp this dynamic view of the living Word, that living stream will flow from our lives into the lives of those whom we teach. We plant and we water, but "God giveth the increase."

"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater: So also shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall

*Kantonen, *Resurgence of the Gospel.*

not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55. 10-11).

Activities in the Field of Christian Education

By I. O. NOTHSTEIN

Nursery Departments. "The greatest growth in Sunday school during the last three years has been in the Nursery Department," says *The Parish School.* "That is as it should be. A great number of little babies have been coming into the world. The Church must reach them. The Nursery Roll and the Nursery Class are two of the main methods of doing this very thing. Our Sunday schools should strengthen their nursery activities.

* * *

To Stimulate the Sunday School Movement. The magazine, *Christian Life,* announces a nation-wide Sunday school increase contest, open to every evangelical church, with valuable prizes in Sunday school equipment to be awarded to the sixty schools making the best scores. Complete details of the plan were announced in the September issue.

An Expert's Testimony. Under the title, "Hail the Sunday School Teacher," J. Edgar Hoover, the foremost expert in the United States on the cause of juvenile delinquency, points to the Sunday school teacher as one of his co-workers in combating crime, in an article in *Christian Life.* Among his valuable comments are found the following:

"America owes a deep debt of gratitude to Sunday school teachers. As crusaders for Christ, they are unselfishly working in the Master's vineyards to bring God into the hearts and minds of our children.

"In a world choked by the fog of materialism, new challenges are now facing these Sunday school teachers.

"Our generation, which is surrounded by materialism and 'get-rich-quick' ideals, is quickly becoming spiritually starved.

"It has produced men and women who look lightly on the law and evade it when it interferes with their self-interest, whether in pleasure or in business. . . . Proof that large numbers of our people have turned away from God can be found in the sordid record of crime, and in the predominance of a materialistic way of life.

"Rampant lawlessness has become a national scandal and the well-being of America is seriously challenged. During 1947, for example, 1,665,110 major crimes were committed in the United States . . . one every 18.9 seconds of the day and night.

"The immediate need facing the Church and the Sunday school today is to bring the riches of Christ to every youngster in the nation. If this is not done, moral indifference will remain and case histories of youngsters caught in the coils of crime will continue to increase.

"The Sunday school must stand in America's first line of defense to protect and teach the many misguided and neglected boys and girls who are thieving, robbing and engaging in numerous other criminal activities.

* * *

THE CHURCH AND 4-H CLUBS. Mr. T. A. Erickson, writing in *The Lutheran Companion,* urges a closer relationship between the rural churches and 4-H Clubs. "Years of experience," he says, "with rural youth problems has led us to the conclusion that a closer partnership between the Church and rural youth programs is highly desirable." Just as the city churches are finding a new and valuable field of endeavor in the scouting organizations, so the rural churches may reap many advantages by fostering the 4-H programs.

"It is clearly evident," he continues, "to anyone familiar with 4-H Club work that the rural church has made a material contribution toward the achievements of some of our most successful clubs. Rural youth programs need the cooperation of the rural church in furnishing leadership in order that more boys and girls may be reached. On the other hand, the rural church is thus enabled to come closer to its own youth, as well as to reach many unchurched boys and girls and homes in the community. It helps its youth to appreciate the 'richer' of rural life in their truest values."

The article contains a detailed plan which is suggested to those interested and is followed by special suggestions for the successful inauguration of the plan. There are also a number of statements from Lutheran pastors who have tried the plan and have found it a great help to their parish development. They have noted how well the 4-H work can be made to tie up with the Sunday school, the Luther League and the Scouting work.

LUTHERAN ORPHAN SCHOOL TO BECOME CHILD RESEARCH CENTER. Important things are happening at the Orphanage maintained by the Immanuel Deaconess Institute, Omaha, Nebr. During the past summer the institution was successful in acquiring a former U. S. Army cantonment property, valued at $16,000, for only a nominal sum to cover the cost of the transaction. This gift was given by the Government on the representation that the property is to be used in connection with a child study program inaugurated by the institution, at the request of the Lutheran Welfare Council of Nebraska. Sister Helen Eriksson, who is to be the head of this project, is now pursuing graduate work in the social service department of the University of Nebraska.

"There is no child research center in the whole Lutheran Church in America," writes the director, Dr. Samuel Miller, "and there are only a few such centers outside of the Church." The main purpose of this new work is to study and solve behavior problems caused by emotional disturbances in children from broken homes, or in children who have been emotionally injured from other causes.

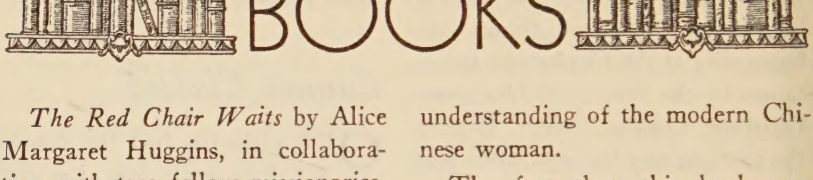
Banner Classes

OUR class has had the banner for three weeks now. I'm glad that the teacher dropped Billy's name from the roll. While he was here we never had a banner class."

So you've heard that, too. And felt a little uneasy about it. You have wondered what to do about the absentee pupil who creates a constant problem for attendance recognition. Some schools have remembered that Billy is important too—that they have a duty to the youngsters who for some reason, or none, are intermittent in their attendance. The same sort of recognition is given to classes whose members and teachers have called on the absentees as to the class whose members are present.

It's so very easy to let souls out of the back door of the church under the guise of attendance rewards. The Good Shepherd is pictured as going after the lost sheep, not as crossing it from His list because it strayed so much.

WILSON EGBERT



The Red Chair Waits by Alice Margaret Huggins, in collaboration with two fellow missionaries, Earl Hoit Ballou and Hugh Laughlin Robinson. Westminster Press. 256 pages. $2.75.

This novel of modern China is truly fascinating reading for both young people and their elders.

It is the story of high-spirited Chien Shu-Lan, whose New Year holiday was spoiled by the nagging thought that no longer could she postpone marriage to Wu, son of her father's friend. The two had been betrothed in infancy by their parents, according to ancient Chinese custom.

Shu-Lan was a Christian and a teacher at the mission school. She loved her work and shuddered at the thought of marriage to a man who was almost a stranger to her. She knew he was not a Christian, and she had heard whispered rumors in the village concerning his occupation.

How Shu-Lan solved her problem and found true happiness, with the blessing of parents, is recorded with subtle humor and with real understanding of the modern Chinese woman.

The fact that this book was written while the author and co-authors were interned in Manila after the Pearl Harbor attack, and the manuscript almost miraculously saved, makes it even more interesting. Buy it for your church lending library. It will elicit interest in Chinese missions. It will also make a welcome Christmas gift for teen-age girls.

Davie Decides by Dorothy Westlake Andrews. Westminster Press. 48 pages. $0.65.

This is a series of stories about a small boy who sulks, finally learns that he misses a lot of fun by sulking, and decides to behave like a five-year-old instead of hiding under the bed when things go wrong.

Children will enjoy hearing about when Davie lost a tooth, when he snatched cookies from a guest, and when he had a heart-to-heart talk with his Daddy.

The Babe of Bethlehem by Arthur W. Gross. Concordia Pub-

lishing House. Single copy, $0.25. 12 copies, $0.20 each.

Sunday-school teachers who are looking for a Christmas booklet to give to Nursery and Beginner children will find this "just the gift." It is the Christmas story in song, story, and colored pictures.

God's World and Johnny by Dorothy Westlake Andrews. Westminster Press. 48 pages. $0.65.

Johnny is a real boy, a small boy, who thinks and asks questions. In these charming stories Johnny's mother and father answer his queries of What? When? Why? Who? He finds the answers to his questions about himself, his surroundings at home, the world of nature, and God.

Because he asks he finds out better how the work of the world is shared, and why people are more important than animals. He learns these things that are interesting to nearly all active-minded children.

The little child who hears these stories will enjoy the brightly colored illustrations while he shares with Johnny, the fun and exciting experiences of learning the answers to What? When? Why? Who? He will find God in his answers, too.

Jesus. Stories for Children by James D. Smart. Westminster Press. 49 pages. $0.65.

This attractive book provides background understanding on the primary level. Written simply and clearly it depicts the kind of person Jesus was; what He did and said; how He chose some of His helper friends; and what other people thought of Him.

Three verses summarize the teaching emphasis: "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." "Jesus of Nazareth went about doing good;" "Lo, I am with you always."

The poem on the back cover is one that every primary child will understand, "Why Do Church Bells Ring Today . . . ." It should be memorized.

Jonathan N. Swanson, sculptor-illustrator, has demonstrated interest and talent in the 14 full-color and 20 black and white illustrations.

Let's Go to Nazareth by Elizabeth Liggett Reed. Westminster Press. 48 pages. $0.65.

This is a group of stories about seven-year-old Tobiah from Nazareth. Primary children are interested in other children and in the

way they live. In this attractive volume they will learn many details about the life of a Jewish boy before the birth of Christ. They will delight in the market place where Jewish children play and colorful caravans arrive from far away. They will enjoy Tobiah and his friends at school and in the synagogue. They will celebrate with Tobiah the impressive Feast of Lights, and learn with him some of the basic laws—basic to both the Hebrew and the Christian religion.

The 14 full-color and 20 black and white illustrations are done by Margaret Ayer, who has lived in the Orient. She paints realistically, as one who has spent time with Tobiah and his playmates.

He Will Abundantly Pardon, by Walter A. Maier. Concordia. 373 pages. $2.75.

This is the sixteenth volume of radio sermons preached by Dr. Maier over the Lutheran Hour. Each sermon is Biblical, evangelistic and full of warm-hearted exhortation. Some of the illustrations used will appeal to Sunday school teachers. This reviewer questions the propriety of devoting about one-fifth of the book to quotations from fan mail.

The Clock of Life

The clock of Life is wound but once,
And no man has the power
To tell just when the hands will stop,
At late or early hour.
Now is the only time you own,
LIVE, LOVE, and TOIL with a will;
Place no faith in tomorrow,
For the clock may then be still.

ANON.